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Katherine Harris MC

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"Since taking office, you and your staff have been in the forefront of veterans' issues locally, regionally and nationally. You have worked tirelessly to help enact concurrent receipt for our disabled veterans, a truly historic event. Your personal involvement in bringing a National Cemetery to the Sarasota County area has us closer to making this a reality

Dr. Richard Swier,
Lt. Col., U.S. Army Ret.
President Sarasota County Veterans Commission

"Once again, thank you for supporting those of us who served this great country..."

Lee F. Kichen,
Lt. Col., U.S. Army Ret.

"She supports the veterans and we love her." "She backs up what she says."

Eugene "Top" Harrison
MGySgt, U.S. Marine Corps Ret.

*"I received my five medals for World War II this week for a job well done. I thank you, and your staff from the bottom of my heart."
"I waited 57 years for this to happen."*

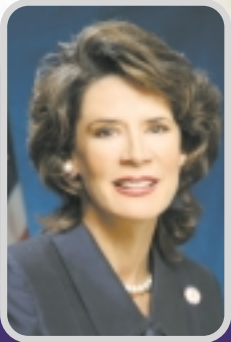
Albert J. Kocjan
Tech. 4th Grade, Army, Veteran

"Congresswoman Katherine Harris has never failed to act as champion for the veterans of District 13. I have no doubts regarding her continued commitment to their cause."

Norena S. Guy,
NCC, U.S. Navy Ret.

"Thank you, thank you. It took just three weeks after I requested assistance with a problem my husband was having with the VA for the problem to be resolved."

Mrs. Marcia Dunn



CONGRESSWOMAN
Katherine Harris

Addressing the Needs of Our Veterans

Congresswoman Katherine Harris

Honoring Those Who Served: Veterans Day 2003

Improving Veterans' Health Care

Congresswoman Harris continues her fight to improve healthcare for our nation's veterans. She was one of only seven members of the Florida's 25-member congressional delegation to sign a letter to House Speaker Dennis Hastert, which emphatically states that the **\$1.4 billion increase in spending for veterans' health care** that the House has approved should be more than doubled to \$3.2 billion.

Congresswoman Harris is also working tenaciously to expand the number of Veterans' Administration Health Care facilities that are located within the 13th Congressional District.



Congresswoman Harris joins with members of local V.F.W. Post 3233 to pay tribute to our nation's P.O.W. & M.I.A.'s

Bill to name Sarasota Post Office after Brigadier General (AUS-RET.) John H. McLain, one of Southwest Florida's American heroes



On May 9, 2003 the late Brigadier General John H. McLain was presented The Freedom Medallion by Mr. Chin Yu a representative of the Republic of Korea to honor the sacrifices the General made while defending the citizens of that country during the Korean War.

On October 20, 2003, the House unanimously passed H.R. 3068, which designates Sarasota's South Gate Branch Post Office after one of Southwest Florida's American heroes, Brigadier General (AUS-RET.) John H. McLain. A veteran of World War II and the Korean War, General McLain was a brave soldier, an eminent scholar, a community activist, as well as a devoted husband, father, and friend. Congresswoman Harris introduced this legislation in order to acknowledge General McLain's lifetime of service to our nation while memorializing his model of courage and selflessness for future generations.

Concurrent Receipt of Military Retired Pay and VA Disability Compensation

Keeping her promise to the 13th District's veterans, the first bill that Congresswoman Harris co-sponsored as a member of Congress was a bill that U.S. Rep. Mike Bilirakis (R-FL) introduced to provide full concurrent receipt for all military retirees with service-related disabilities.

On October 16, 2003, Congresswoman Harris joined Congressman Bilirakis, Speaker Dennis Hastert, Majority Whip Roy Blunt (R-MO), and other House Republican leaders in announcing that Congress and the White House have reached a compromise solution on this bill.

While Congresswoman Harris wishes that Congress could have approved full concurrent receipt for all military retirees with service-connected disabilities this year, she believes that this agreement constitutes a dramatic step in the right direction for Southwest Florida's veterans. The plan, effective immediately January 1, authorizes

\$22 billion in new money over the next 10 years to expand the number of military retirees who can obtain full concurrent receipt from 30,000 to 250,000 who can obtain full concurrent receipt.

House Majority Whip Blunt hailed Rep. Harris' involvement in achieving this legislation; "Katherine Harris' hard work has helped us craft a viable plan to deliver concurrent receipt for Florida veterans. Katherine's dedication has been unwavering, and today we were able to announce a plan to provide concurrent receipt for more veterans and retirees than have ever been covered."

The new concurrent receipt proposal announced October 16, 2003 effectively:

- ✓ Expands the Combat Related Special Compensation program to military retirees rated by the VA as 10-100% disabled and whose disabilities are combat related.
- ✓ Extends Combat Related Special Compensation to ALL RETIRED NATIONAL GUARDSMEN AND RESERVISTS rated 10-100% disabled and whose disabilities are combat related.
- ✓ Establishes FULL CONCURRENT RECEIPT for military retirees rated 50-100% disabled by the VA.

Veterans' Cemetery for District 13

Due in large part to Congresswoman Harris' refusal to take "no" for an answer, the 13th District's 374,000 veterans have come much closer to obtaining a desperately needed national cemetery in Sarasota. She convinced the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs to amend the National Cemetery Expansion Act of 2003 to require the construction of a new National Cemetery in the Sarasota area. The Senate passed this legislation, as amended, on Friday October 17, 2003. Once this bill receives final House approval as well as the President's signature, the 13th District's veterans will finally receive the honored resting place they earned in a location close to home.